

# The Hegelian Concept-Truth Is Found Neither In The Thesis Nor The Antithesis But In An Emergent Synthesis That Reconciles The Two: How

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**Abstract:** *The study examine the Hegelian concept-truth is found neither in the thesis nor the antithesis but in an emergent synthesis that reconciles the two and how. This research explores the evolution of the concept of dialectics, tracing its origins from Socratic dialogues and Descartes' thoughts through to Hegel's transformative interpretations. Initially, dialectic was a method aimed at discerning fundamental truths by clearing misconceptions via argumentation and refutation. However, Hegel repurposed the dialectical framework to emphasize the dynamic interplay between opposing ideas—thesis and antithesis leading to a synthesis that reconciles contradictions, thus marking a progression in consciousness and understanding. This synthesis transcends mere compromise, offering a higher understanding that incorporates the valid elements of both conflicting perspectives. The article further discusses the relevance of Hegelian dialectics in contemporary contexts such as organizational conflict resolution, where conflict is viewed not as detrimental but as a catalyst for growth and innovation. Hegel's dialectical method is positioned as essential in navigating complex, multifaceted conflicts in today's globalized world, advocating that true progress arises through the resolution of contradictions. Ultimately, the synthesis remains an ongoing process, vital for fostering continued dialogue and deeper comprehension. The implications of Hegel's dialectics are applicable across various fields, including business ethics and education, providing a framework to cultivate shared identities and creative problem-solving in the face of opposition.*

**Keywords:** Antithesis, Hegelian Dialectic, Synthesis and Thesis.

## INTRODUCTION

Before the emergence of Hegel, the concept of dialectic referred to the process of argument and refutation through which philosophers sought to unravel the truth. Socrates, as evident in the dialogues of Plato, was the first to use it (Hamidah 2020). In the dialogues, Socrates saw himself as a midwife who helps individuals to give birth to the knowledge they are already pregnant with. In the dialogues as presented by Plato, one person would advance a proposition, and Socrates would refute it and give arguments why that proposition is wrong, thereby clearing the way for a better and more convincing argument to take its place; the process would continue until the person gets at the truth. Rene Descartes also used the dialectic method to arrive at his famous cogito ergo sum (I think therefore I am) proposition. Dialectical reasoning, before Hegel, therefore, was meant to clear away misconceptions to arrive at first principles (basic truth), which are basic and fundamental, upon which certain and indubitable knowledge could be built. Hegel, however, used the dialectic for a different purpose than arriving at first principles. To grasp how Hegel sees the dialectics, we need to first understand that Hegel, like Immanuel Kant, was an idealist. Like Kant, Hegel believed that we do not perceive the world or anything in it directly; all the mind could have access to were ideas of the world images, perceptions, and concepts. Hegel's idealism, however, differs from Kant's in two ways. Hegel held that the ideas we have of the world are totally shaped by the ideas of people around us; this is accomplished through the language, the traditions, and the cultural and religious institutions of our society. These collective consciousnesses of a given society, which shape the ideas and consciousness of each individual, Hegel calls 'spirit' (Keikhaee, 2020). The concept of dialectics, as developed by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, has been a cornerstone of philosophical thought for centuries. In the context of conflict resolution, dialectics offers a unique approach to understanding and resolving conflicts. According to Hegel's dialectical theory, conflicts arise from the inherent contradictions between opposing views or ideas, and the resolution of these conflicts requires the synthesis of these opposing views. In recent years, the Hegelian concept of dialectics has been applied in various fields, including psychology, sociology, and business. For example, a study published in the Journal of Conflict Resolution (Tjosvold & Johnson, 2012) found that dialectics can be used to create a sense of shared identity and common purpose among conflicting parties. Similarly, a study published in the Journal of Business Ethics (Husted & Allen, 2011) demonstrated that dialectics can be used to understand and resolve conflicts between stakeholders in corporate social responsibility.

The Hegelian concept of dialectics is particularly relevant in today's world, where conflicts are increasingly complex and multifaceted. In an era of rapid globalization and technological change, conflicts are more likely to involve competing values, interests, and perspectives. The Hegelian concept of dialectics offers a framework for understanding and resolving these conflicts in a way that is both nuanced and effective. Hegel's dialectics, therefore, see conflict in a positive light. It sees it as a necessary force for consciousness to move to a higher state (Cho 2020). Without conflict, therefore, there would be no progress according to Hegel's dialectics. When this reasoning is translated into the organization, it would be clear that Hegel would see organizational conflict as a necessary driving force for organizational progress. This is not in tandem with the dysfunctional view of conflict, which sees it as an evil that needs to be avoided. Hegel would see it as a stimulus for growth. It is conflict that produces an antithesis that is eventually resolved to a higher level of truth—the synthesis. Conflict in an organization, therefore, would produce an antithesis, which would be later resolved into a synthesis: higher productivity for the organization or faster achievement of goals and objectives. In the eyes of Hegel, therefore, organizational conflict is a productive force. It is a force that can stimulate members of the organization to increase their knowledge and skills and also their contribution to organizational innovation and productivity. Unlike the dysfunctional position (the position that considers conflict as evil), an approach from the Hegelian perspective sees the key to organizational success as lying not in its structure, clarity, and orderliness, but in creativity, responsiveness, and adaptability. This creativity would be engineered through a conflict that would provoke a response, and the response (solution) would be adapted by the organization. This adaptation would lead to the growth and development of the organization (Dickman 2020).

According to Hegel (1807), the concept of truth has been a subject of intense debate and scrutiny for centuries. From ancient Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle to modern thinkers like Kant and Heidegger, the notion of truth has been approached from various angles. One of the most influential and thought-provoking perspectives on truth is the Hegelian concept, developed by German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). For Hegel, truth is not a static or fixed entity but a dynamic and evolving process. He believed that truth is not something that can be grasped or known independently, but rather it is an unfolding of reality itself. In his influential work "Phenomenology of Spirit," Hegel argues that truth is not a property of individual consciousness or objects, but rather it is a product of the dialectical process of human understanding (Pannenberg, 1991). Hegel's concept of truth is rooted in his dialectical method, which involves the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. According to this method, truth emerges from the tension and contradiction between opposing forces or ideas. This process of dialectical reasoning is ongoing, with each stage building upon the previous one, leading to a higher level of understanding and comprehension (Kuhn, 1962).

Truth, as most understand it, is both simple and complex. The most popular theories of truth considered by most today are correspondence theories, coherence theories, and pragmatic theories. However, there are many more accounts of what constitutes truth in the modern day, many grounding the notion in different epistemological approaches concerned with social relations and perceptions, some grounding it on logical systems but these aren't all that popular, and I'd like to just compare the major notions to the Hegelian position (empyreantrail.wordpress.com, 2016). Hegel, unsurprisingly, has a conception of truth that is familiar yet alien to us. First, it must be made clear that Hegel is concerned with *Truth* and not truth. In The Phenomenology of Spirit, Hegel tells us that philosophy is not interested in historical or empirical truths; such truths are singular, unessential, and contingent, of no interest to the mind, which aspires to gain universal and necessary knowledge. Hegel's truth is a priori and purely conceptual, requiring no empirical correlate. That says enough about Hegel's judgment on pragmatic theories of truth. For Hegel, the Platonic notion that Truth must be what it is in itself eternally holds: a concept itself must be true, and it is the concept that is the criterion of empirical judgments of truth. Truth must be internally coherent in that it is not a contradiction of the kind of  $A \sim A$  in the standard propositional sense. Hegel brings to light something not thought of by most (Plato, Spinoza, and some others had an inkling of it): Truth must be *necessary* in itself. This aspect is provided by the logic of concepts themselves, by how a genuine concept moves itself, how it freely opens itself to *others*, and eventually returns to itself, closing the circle of its being and grounding itself; thus, showing its own self-determination and objectivity. This necessity, eternity, and coherence of Truth is familiar in that most do understand Truth as something that is what it is regardless of us. Truth is objective, truth is always true, truth is necessarily what it is, and truth is not self-contradicting or irrational. Par for the course for Hegel, even correspondence between concept and object is not excluded. The notion that judgments of truth are correspondence *to* concept is not unfamiliar (empyreantrail.wordpress.com, 2016).

Truth is the system of the totality of the world from matter to mind that knows matter and mind, not a contingent conglomeration of independent plurality of atomistic truths. Secondly, common understanding agrees that truth is what is, but either simply assumes we unproblematically have it or denies that we can grasp it in itself, that we can only have our subjective frame of knowledge without objectivity. Hegel claims we can indeed grasp Truth in-itself; not from our side, however, not from an arbitrary subjective standpoint, but from *its* side from the standpoint of the object itself. This requires a new way of thinking, which allows the concept of the object to develop itself before us without our subjective arbitrary inputs determining it. It requires that the very concept of a concept in general be changed (empyreantrail.wordpress.com, 2016). The Hegelian concept of truth offers a dynamic and holistic understanding of reality, emphasizing the importance of ongoing dialogue and critique in our pursuit of knowledge and understanding. While it has had significant influence on various fields, it also has implications and critiques that require further exploration and development. As we continue to navigate the complexities of human existence, the Hegelian concept of truth remains a powerful tool for understanding our place within the world (Pippin, 2020).

However, the study examine the Hegelian concept-truth is found neither in the thesis nor the antithesis but in an emergent synthesis which reconciles the two and how.

### **CONCEPT OF HEGELIAN DIALECTIC**

In today's polarized world, it's easy to get caught up in the binary thinking of thesis and antithesis. We're constantly presented with opposing views, forced to choose between two sides, and often feel like we're stuck in a never-ending cycle of conflict. The concept of dialectics, as developed by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, has been applied to various fields, including philosophy, psychology, and sociology. In the context of conflict resolution, dialectics offers a unique approach to understanding and resolving conflicts. According to Hegel's dialectical theory, conflicts arise from the inherent contradictions between opposing views or ideas, and the resolution of these conflicts requires the synthesis of these opposing views (Bhaskar, 2011).

Conflict is an inherent part of human relationships, and it can have significant negative impacts on individuals, groups, and organizations. According to Deutsch (1973), conflict can lead to decreased productivity, increased stress, and even physical harm. Therefore, understanding and resolving conflicts is crucial for maintaining healthy relationships and promoting social cohesion. In the context of conflict resolution, opposites play a crucial role in creating and resolving conflicts. Opposites can be seen as two opposing views or ideas that are in conflict with each other. According to Tversky and Kahneman (1979), opposites can be used to create a sense of cognitive dissonance, which can motivate individuals to change their attitudes or behaviors. This concept has been applied in various fields, including marketing, politics, and social justice. Hegel's dialectical theory posits that conflict arises from the inherent contradictions between opposing views or ideas. According to this theory, conflicts can be resolved through the synthesis of these opposing views. This synthesis is not a compromise between the two opposing views but rather a new idea that emerges from their interaction. According to Bhaskar (2011), Hegel's dialectical theory offers a more nuanced understanding of conflict and its resolution.

In recent years, dialectics has been applied in various fields, including business, education, and social justice. According to a study published in the Journal of Business Ethics (Husted & Allen, 2011), dialectics can be used to understand and resolve conflicts between stakeholders in corporate social responsibility. Similarly, a study published in the Journal of Educational Psychology (Lipman & Mullenbach, 2011) found that dialectics can be used to promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills in students.

### **THESIS**

The Hegelian thesis refers to the initial or original idea or concept that sets the stage for a dialectical process. In Hegel's philosophy, the thesis is the starting point for a process of development, where it is confronted by its antithesis and eventually, through a process of synthesis, gives rise to a new level of understanding or reality (Kautz, 2015). The Hegelian thesis has also been applied in the field of conflict resolution. A study published by Tjosvold and Johnson (2012) found that the Hegelian thesis can be used to create a sense of shared identity and common purpose among conflicting parties. The thesis presents the status quo, the viewpoint that is currently accepted and widely held.

### **ANTITHESIS**

The Hegelian antithesis refers to the opposing view or idea that emerges in response to the initial thesis. This opposing view is often a direct challenge to the original thesis and may be characterized by a fundamentally different perspective, value, or interest (Husted & Allen, 2011). In conflict resolution, the antithesis is often represented by the opposing party or group, which may have its own set of values, interests, and perspectives. The antithesis may also be represented by internal contradictions or tensions within a given party or group.

### **SYNTHESIS**

The synthesis is the final stage of the dialectical process, where the thesis and antithesis are reconciled through a process of integration. The synthesis is often characterized by a higher level of understanding or reality that incorporates the valid insights and truths of both the thesis and antithesis (Tjosvold & Johnson, 2012). In conflict resolution, the synthesis is often achieved through a combination of negotiation, mediation, and problem-solving. The goal of the synthesis is to create a new understanding or perspective that takes into account the valid concerns and interests of all parties involved. Synthesis is a crucial component of Hegel's dialectical theory. According to this theory, synthesis is not a compromise between the two opposing views but rather a new idea that emerges from their interaction. Synthesis can be used to create a sense of shared identity and common purpose among conflicting parties (Tjosvold & Johnson, 2012). Synthesis shares a new viewpoint to resolve a problem. In recent years, we've seen several examples of synthesis in action. For instance:

- In the field of climate change, scientists have long debated the role of human versus natural factors in causing global warming. However, a recent study published in the journal *Nature* (Hansen et al., 2016) found that human activities are responsible for about 75% of global warming since 1950. This synthesis of opposing views has led to a more nuanced understanding of the issue and informs more effective policy solutions.
- In the realm of artificial intelligence (AI), researchers have been debating whether AI will augment human capabilities or replace human workers. A recent study published in *Science* (Lee et al., 2020) found that AI can actually augment human capabilities by improving decision-making and reducing biases. This synthesis of opposing views highlights the potential benefits of AI and informs more effective strategies for its implementation.
- In the field of social justice, activists have been debating whether to focus on individualism or collectivism. A recent study published in *Psychology Today* (Cooper et al., 2020) found that both individualistic and collectivistic approaches are necessary for achieving social justice. This synthesis of opposing views recognizes that individuals must work together to create social change.

## DIALECTIC METHOD

Every thesis for an argument has its antithesis, such as life and death, love and hate, day and night, and youth and old age. Whole nature is a reconciliation of opposites, and Hegel's dialectic shows that any thesis implies its antithesis and that the two are united in a higher synthesis in which the opposition between the two is reconciled and overcome in a larger unity (Runes, 1958). The Absolute Idea passes through a dialectic of many triads each of which has its own thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. In the thesis, a certain aspect of reality is revealed, and in the antithesis, a contrasting aspect appears, and the two are synthesized in a higher synthesis. Hegel uses the term abstract or immediate for thesis and negative or mediate for antithesis and concrete for synthesis. Hegel's concept begins with the concept of being, and this is the thesis. Hegel believed that the inner essence of the absolute could be reached by human reason because the Absolute is disclosed in nature as well as in the working of the human mind. What connects these three—the Absolute, nature, and man's mind—is thought itself. Nature is the objective self, as opposed to the conscious self. The second basic triad of nature is matter, life, and mind. In matter, the thesis we do find that parts are related mechanically and in life, the antithesis, they are united organically. The higher concept, mind, is a union of matter and life. Mind, or the subjective spirit, is the synthesis of the evolution of matter and life. This mind in man is capable of controlling both the material body and the principle of life in man. In fact, the mind is the union of both matter and life in man who can reason with self-consciousness. Hegel calls this self-consciousness mind or spirit. The basic triad of this part is the subjective spirit (thesis), which refers to the inner workings of the human mind, and the objective spirit, which represents the mind in its external embodiment in the social and political institutions, becoming the antithesis, and at the apex of knowledge stands the absolute as its synthesis (Wright, 1966).

The objective spirit is explained by Hegel with reference to the social consciousness or the society in general. This concept of right has three implications, right to property (thesis), right to contract (anti-thesis), and right to punish (synthesis), respectively. To unite the above thesis and antithesis, a higher level of concept called right to punish arrives as a synthesis. If, claiming certain rights from the society called the concept of right becomes the thesis, then discharging certain duties to the society with duty consciousness called the concept of morality becomes the antithesis. The unity of reality finds its richest expression at the man-society level. Our consciousness of the absolute, says Hegel, is achieved progressively as the mind moves from art to philosophy through religion. In the object of art, the mind apprehends the absolute as beauty (Stumpf, 1966).

Since no sensuous form can adequately convey the profound spiritual truth, the dialectic passes from art to its antithesis in religion. Religion occupies an intermediate position between art and philosophy. Ultimately, in philosophy, according to Hegel, the thinker is the Absolute, the subject matter of thinking is the Absolute, and the medium through which the Absolute thinks is also the Absolute. Thus, Hegel places philosophy as the highest point of development of human knowledge. The history of philosophy is, for him, the development of absolute self-consciousness in the mind of man. The philosophical mind discovers the absolute in all stages of the dialectic, and in so doing, man becomes rational (Runes, 1958).

While dialectics offers a powerful approach to conflict resolution, there are several challenges in applying this theory. According to García and García (2013), one of the main challenges is the difficulty in identifying and understanding the opposing views or ideas that are involved in a conflict. Additionally, synthesizing opposing views requires a high level of cognitive ability and emotional intelligence.

## HEGELIAN CONCEPT-TRUTH IS FOUND NEITHER IN THE THESIS NOR THE ANTITHESIS BUT IN AN EMERGENT SYNTHESIS THAT RECONCILES THE TWO: HOW

In the Hegelian dialectic, the thesis and antithesis represent two opposing views or ideas. The thesis is a statement or idea that sets out to explain a particular phenomenon or concept. The antithesis, on the other hand, is a contradictory idea that challenges the thesis. This conflict between the two creates a tension that drives the dialectic forward, leading to a higher level of understanding and truth. Hegel's concept of the synthesis involves the idea that when two conflicting ideas, the thesis and the antithesis, come together, they form a new, higher truth that incorporates elements of both. This synthesis is not simply a compromise or blending of the two



opposing ideas, but a transformation and evolution that transcends them. The process of reaching synthesis involves a dialectical movement where the conflicting ideas clash and interact with each other, leading to a resolution that incorporates the best aspects of both sides. This synthesis is seen as a higher truth because it goes beyond the limitations of the original thesis and antithesis, creating a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the issue at hand.

In this way, the synthesis reconciles the contradictions and tensions between thesis and antithesis, allowing for a new and more complete perspective to emerge. The synthesis is not static or final but is instead part of an ongoing process of thought and development, where new contradictions and tensions will inevitably arise, leading to further synthesis and growth.

## CONCLUSION

The Hegelian concept of dialectics has been a cornerstone of philosophical thought for centuries, and its application in various fields, including conflict resolution, has been significant. The dialectical process, as developed by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, involves the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, where conflicts arise from the inherent contradictions between opposing views or ideas and are resolved through the synthesis of these opposing views. The Hegelian concept of dialectics offers a unique approach to understanding and resolving conflicts, as it recognizes that conflicts are an inherent part of human relationships and that they can be resolved through the synthesis of opposing views. The Hegelian thesis refers to the initial or original idea or concept that sets the stage for a dialectical process. In Hegel's philosophy, the thesis is the starting point for a process of development, where it is confronted by its antithesis and eventually, through a process of synthesis, gives rise to a new level of understanding or reality. The Hegelian thesis has also been applied in the field of conflict resolution, where it can be used to create a sense of shared identity and common purpose among conflicting parties.

The Hegelian antithesis refers to the opposing view or idea that emerges in response to the initial thesis. This opposing view is often a direct challenge to the original thesis and may be characterized by a fundamentally different perspective, value, or interest. In conflict resolution, the antithesis is often represented by the opposing party or group, which may have its own set of values, interests, and perspectives. The synthesis is the final stage of the dialectical process, where the thesis and antithesis are reconciled through a process of integration. The synthesis is often characterized by a higher level of understanding or reality that incorporates the valid insights and truths of both the thesis and antithesis. In conflict resolution, the synthesis is often achieved through a combination of negotiation, mediation, and problem-solving.

The Hegelian concept of dialectics has been applied in various fields, including business, education, and social justice. According to a study published in the Journal of Business Ethics (Husted & Allen, 2011), dialectics can be used to understand and resolve conflicts between stakeholders in corporate social responsibility. Similarly, a study published in the Journal of Educational Psychology (Lipman & Mullenbach, 2011) found that dialectics can be used to promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills in students. The Hegelian concept of dialectics offers a dynamic and holistic understanding of reality, emphasizing the importance of ongoing dialogue and critique in our pursuit of knowledge and understanding. While it has had significant influence on various fields, it also has implications and critiques that require further exploration and development.

However, the Hegelian concept of dialectics reminds us that conflicts are an inherent part of human relationships and that they can be resolved through the synthesis of opposing views. By embracing this concept, we can move towards a more nuanced understanding of conflict resolution and promote greater social cohesion.

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